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State Dept. review completed

Polish Foreign Minister On His Way Out?

During Polish Foreign Minister Stefan Olszowski's five day absence from the country to pay an official visit to Mongolia (December 11-16), the party politburo took the unusual step of meeting to discuss "tasks and activities" of government organs concerned with foreign affairs. The politburo reportedly decided that, in view of their new active foreign policy, there was need for "improvement of functioning" of the foreign affairs establishment and for "strengthening political leadership." Holding a meeting on this topic without Olszowski's attendance and the critical nature of the findings has prompted speculation that Olszowski's tenure may be limited.

Olszowski received his job only a year ago, and at that time he left his position on the secretariat, retaining only his politburo slot. Rumors that he would "soon" be leaving have circulated frequently; some have claimed that he was on his way up, and some, on his way down. Essentially a party functionary with no diplomatic experience prior to becoming foreign minister, Olszowski may, as one report claims, have been selected by Gierek specifically to head the Polish team in normalizing relations with West Germany; now that that chore is done, he may return to party affairs.

The 40-year old Olszowski was first named a member of the central committee at 33 and has had a brilliant political career in the party. Most sources agree that he is exceedingly ambitious and has no intention of remaining foreign minister too long. As far as we know, he still retains Gierek's confidence and has conducted himself as foreign minister very much in the spirit of Gierek's activist foreign policy. If, therefore, he is to move down, the trouble may lie in the realm of intra-party affairs rather than in his performance on the international scene. We would speculate, however, that if he leaves, he will step up.

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Mladenov Ends Visit To Romania

Bulgarian Foreign Minister Mladenov ended his rather undiplomatic three-day official visit to Romania on 18 December, by joining his hosts in one of the most bland communiques in the annals of Balkan diplomacy. The document

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appears to represent the lowest common denominator on which both sides could agree. The points of substance (the few that there are) reveal nothing new. The one noteworthy point is the disproportionately high (by Romanian, not Bulgarian standards) eulogizing of the Soviets. Bucharest may have gone along with Moscow's lap-dog on this point in order to have something to point to when the Soviets bring up the Romanians' performance in Helsinki. (Ceausescu is expected to meet with Brezhnev while in Moscow for the 50th anniversary celebrations).

After the initial flare-up of differences in the welcoming reception following Mladenov's arrival, the two sides settled down to talking around each other. The communique doesn't even contain such boiler-plate as the need and desirability of creating a nuclear free zone in the Balkans. The subject of European security was handled in such a way as to indicate both sides consider it a nice idea for establishing the fundamental principles governing state-to-state relations. On the specifics of these principles, however, there are obvious major differences between Bucharest and Sofia.

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Further Controls Over Yugoslav Media

Party guidance of the press, radio and television will become more systematic as a result of a consultative conference held last week between members of the party presidium and representatives of the media. Prior to the conference, party dissatisfaction had been shown by the firing of several top media personnel. Institutional changes now have been proposed to prevent the recurrence of unacceptable behavior.

Todo Kurtovic, LCY Executive Bureau member, delivered the party's analysis. He noted the progress already made by the media but then jumped into his major theme that a "closer linkage" must be established between them and society. He criticized the press for developing "separate and independent" policies and for acting like another "party." Independent and creative writing must be encouraged but only in conjunction with "an attitude of social responsibility."

Kurtovic proposed that the proper linkage could be established by the formation of "councils" in each information organ which could exert "substantial influence" on policy matters. He, however, did not specify how the members would be chosen.

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The media, no doubt, will become even more cautious in the coming months, possibly hoping to avoid the creation of these councils. In any case, it would be premature to ring the deathbell over the limited freedom of the press which Yugoslavia has achieved in recent years.

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Romanian Humor--On Occasion

Periodically a joke about the rather humorless Ceausescu regime circulates in Bucharest. The Embassy reports this latest bit of Balkan wit:

President Ceausescu was at a party and was talking to a beautiful woman whom he was trying hard to impress. "Would you like a new car, my dear?" he asked her. "No," she replied, "I already have two cars." "How about a villa?" asked the President. "I already have the largest villa in Romania," she responded with a deep sigh which showed off her obvious assets. "Well then, what would you like?" asked a perplexed Ceausescu. "For you to open all the borders," she replied. "What!" said Ceausescu, taken aback, "and leave you and me alone in Romania!!"

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